

## SBIRS Elements

The SBIRS architecture is not a revolutionary idea. It is instead an evolutionary step forward in space based infrared surveillance.

Standing watch in the skies for the past quarter century has been the Defense Support Program (DSP). Integrated with DSP are the Attack and Launch Early Reporting to Theater (ALERT) program operated by the Air Force's 11th Space Warning Squadron and the Joint Tactical Ground Station (JTACS) operated by the Army and Navy. These two systems utilize DSP and other data to provide U.S. forces with enhanced theater based missile warning. ALERT has been operational since 1995 and JTACS since 1997.

Currently under development, a follow-on program to DSP called "SBIRS High" is scheduled for first launch in 2002. Completing the architecture, a new Low Earth Orbiting element called "SBIRS Low" will be added to the SBIRS architecture in 2004.

### Defense Support Program

#### -- History --



The Defense Support Program (DSP) is an early warning satellite system operated by Air Force Space Command (AFSPC) and developed by the Air Force's Space and Missile Systems Center. DSP provides 24 hour, worldwide surveillance for missile warning and nuclear burst detection and serves as the space segment of the U.S. Integrated Tactical Warning & Attack Assessment System.

The DSP program was a follow-on to the Missile Defense Alarm System (MIDAS) and Vela Programs. MIDAS was started in 1960 and proved the operational concept of space based infrared detectors and other technologies by 1963. The Vela program was developed in 1963 to monitor nuclear test ban treaty compliance. Both programs were

### *INTEGRATED PROGRAM SCHEDULE*

